



**The  
Puerto Rican  
Prisoners of War  
and  
Violations of their  
Human Rights**

## **SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## **Introduction**

# ***The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War***

***by Juan Manuel Delgado, Historian***

On April 4, 1980, the repressive forces of the United States arrested eleven Puerto Ricans in the suburb of Evanston, Illinois. They were immediately accused of membership in the **Armed Forces of Puerto Rican National Liberation (FALN)**. The arrests took place at 4:00 in the afternoon and by 10:00 that evening, the patriots had declared themselves "prisoners of war".

The eleven arrestees were Carlos Alberto Torres, Luis Rosa, Freddie Méndez, Adolfo Matos, Elizam Escobar, Ricardo Jiménez, Ida Luz Rodríguez, Dylcia Pagán, Carmen Valentín, Alicia Rodríguez and Haydeé Torres.

Afterwards, a massive campaign was carried out to publicly denounce the psychological torture of Freddie Méndez. Méndez was subject to psychological torture and sophisticated "pressure" and brainwashing techniques until he became a mouthpiece of the federal authorities.

The principled position of those arrested—the prisoner of war position—introduced a new front of struggle to the international arena. This new front was publicly backed by organizations that support Puerto Rico's right to armed revolution of an anti-imperialist and anti-colonial nature. However, confronted with the fact that some combatants had been captured, the creation of organizations to defend the prisoners of war became necessary.

Because of the circumstances described beforehand, the **National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War** was immediately organized.

### ***Who is a Prisoner of War?***

From the international viewpoint, a prisoner of war is any combatant or reserve, that in any phase or circumstance of war, either by individual or collective surrender, or by being captured, falls into the enemy's hands.

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In ancient times, prisoners of war were assassinated or used as slaves to carry out back breaking tasks. In many towns, this was the origin of slavery.

In the Middle Ages, this way of thinking changed favorably for the prisoner given that at least theoretically, one could perceive—within the context of Christian ideology—that it would be a sin to deprive a prisoner of his life or condemn him to slavery. Later, the Church advanced the practice of considering combatants, and not the civilian population, as prisoners. This was a step forward. Progress was made in this area after the Middle Ages, and after the French Revolution, basic principles were established for the humanitarian treatment of prisoners of war. The Crimean War and the war between France and Sardinia provoked a reaction favorable to the recognition of an international accord which would better the conditions of wounded and infirm soldiers. It is from that perspective that the Geneva Convention is celebrated in 1864. The international treaty, signed on August 22 of that year, was approved by twelve European countries and by Persia. It was later recognized by almost all sovereign countries.

At the 1899 Hague Peace Conference, the Geneva Convention accords were ratified and expanded to include maritime war. In 1906, a new Geneva Conference, signed by 35 countries, superseded the 1864 accords. Another conference took place in 1929 and was largely responsible for achieving a maximum of respect, fair and humane treatment for all prisoners of war. These agreements were expanded in 1949, the product of four international Geneva Conferences. The agreements took effect in 1950. As we can see, there exists a large body of international law which protects prisoners of war.

### *Origin of the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War*

The history of Puerto Rico demonstrates that for almost two centuries, distinct sectors of Puerto Rican society have been at war against the invaders who held political, military and economic power. First against Spain and since 1898 against the United States, the state of war has existed and exists because the roots of the war existed and exist in contemporary Puerto Rico.

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Spain made war on the emancipation movement—the Nationalist movement. Spain also made war on Central and South America and the Antilles, including Puerto Rico. Spain made war on our people throughout the entire 19th century. While the Liberating Army, led by Simón Bolívar celebrated a victory in Boyacá and entered Bogotá as the liberator of New Granada, the Spanish Army captured a secret society that rebelled in Yauco in 1820. Some town historians sustain that the army used firing squads to kill the leaders of the uprising in the public plaza. While McKinley celebrated his imperialist victory, the army was executing rebels captured in the town of Ciales. Isn't it war to execute by public firing squad those who rebel against the colonial State? That is exactly what Spain did with the small property-owners, journeymen, slaves, artisans, indentured servants and other sectors that protested against the colonial State during the entire 19th century.

### *War Booty of 1898*

Puerto Rico was invaded and occupied by military forces in 1898. Try as they may to justify martial law in Puerto Rico, bourgeois jurists and local colonialists must accept that the colonial legislation imposed on the Puerto Rican people (Foraker and Jones Acts, ELA, etc) is the result of an act of war.

The state of war continued for the duration of the military dictatorship, imposed from 1898-1900. After all military resistance had been silenced, either by disarming the people or destroying the armed forces that existed, the US government initiated psychological warfare. This kind of warfare was initiated during the military invasion and was continued by organizing all colonial structures whose purpose was the same—political oppression and economic exploitation.

Almost instantly, a public school system was established to maintain imperialism and colonial ideology.

The invaders instilled fear by means of terror and propagated the myth that if the US were to "abandon" Puerto Rico, the people would die of hunger.

It is a little-known fact that this type of terror was the action by generals such as General Davis, who closed down various newspapers, among them, *Combat*, *The Machinegun* and *The Bomb*, as

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well as jailing journalists or reporters who supported independence for Puerto Rico or were critical of the dictatorship. According to the distinguished historian Loida Figueroa, general Davis threatened to shoot several reporters if they continued to speak out in favor of independence.

The political history of that era is well known. The US military forces and police maintained a state of war against all liberation movements.

### *The Independence Movement's Reply*

Confronted by this imperialist aggression and by this state of war maintained by the occupying forces, the independence movement replied with revolutionary violence. Since the beginning of the 19th Century, the independence movement has used revolutionary violence. The list of actions is extensive, ranging from the conspiracy at San Germán in 1809 to the uprising of Ciales, San Germán and Sabana Grande in 1898. The Spanish occupation forces were the object of more than thirty conspiracies. Some, like the Lares Uprising, the riots and sedition of 1897 and the Secret Societies at the end of the Century, became popular rebellions. Another important act of revolutionary violence was that carried out by the slaves. By 1873, over twenty slave conspiracies had been carried out, including some of great political importance such as the Ponce and Vega Baja conspiracies.

Since the beginning of the North American invasion, the independence movement has responded with revolutionary violence to each aggression. In 1898, there was military resistance, albeit isolated, by guerrilla groups. This spontaneous movement, while neither of a popular character or supported by the institutionalized independence movement, remains a testament to the volition and commitment to our national sovereignty. It was a historic response, symbolic because it came at a difficult moment in which certain sectors of the independence movement believed that the invasion was a liberating process and other sectors of Puerto Rican separatism believed in annexation. Some desired independence from Spain in order to be annexed by the US. As I have pointed out since 1976, by the end of the 19th Century, Puerto Rican separatism was divided into two tendencies, independence-oriented separatists

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and annexationist-oriented separatists. That division, among other factors, affected the development of the independence movement after the North American invasion and occupation.

After enduring a period of civil strife from 1900 to 1930—there still surged a series of independence conspiracies in 1899 and 1900—Puerto Rican nationalism was organized to achieve independence by using various means of struggle, including armed struggle. The 1930's were characterized by imperialist repression and at the same time, by revolutionary violence. The Nationalists' violence was of a retaliatory nature. In 1950, the Jayuya uprising, an anti-colonial rebellion took place and the reverberations of liberating gunpowder were heard at Blair House. This act of heroism was repeated in 1954, this time at the US Congress. Several clandestine organizations have entered the fight for Puerto Rican independence by the end of the 1960's. This included the **Armed Comandos of Liberation (CAL)**, the **Puerto Rican Popular Army (Macheteros)**, the **Armed Forces of Puerto Rican National Liberation (FALN)** and the **Armed Forces of Popular Resistance (FARP)** among others. All enjoy great prestige, admiration and recognition within the independence movement.

### *International Law*

Armed struggle, military resistance and whatever form of struggle that leads to the independence of nations that are colonized, invaded and occupied by foreign military troops, is recognized as a right by the UN. Puerto Rico, by virtue of being a colonial state is supported by International Law.

On October 12, 1970, UN resolution 2621 approved by the General Assembly, declared colonialism an international crime. Said resolution reaffirmed the right of any intervened, colonized nation to utilize whatever form of struggle is necessary to obtain its independence.

International Law is also very specific in reference to prisoners of war. According to the Geneva Convention, combatants who have declared themselves prisoners of war must be recognized as such. Those arrested in Evanston were armed and accused of belonging to the Armed Forces of Puerto Rican National Liberation. The nature of the arrest and the US government's own indictment

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only serves to reaffirm that the eleven were combatants in the struggle for Puerto Rican independence at the time of their arrests. According to the Geneva Treaty, ratified by the UN in 1949, captured soldiers are prisoners of war. The United States was one of the signators to the Geneva Convention.

UN Resolution 2621 also points out that each prisoner of war must be treated in accord with the Geneva Convention, which was approved on January 12, 1949. (UN Treaty series, volume 24, 1950-52). Along with this resolution, there exists others that clearly establish that all combatants who struggle for the independence and self-determination of colonized peoples must be considered prisoners of war at the moment of their capture. In addition, captured combatants must also be treated according to the stipulations of the Geneva Convention. Examples of these resolutions are No. 2852 of December 20, 1971 and resolution 3101, approved on December 12, 1973.

In a meeting on July 8, 1977, the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Human Rights applicable to Armed Conflict approved the additional protocols of the Geneva Convention of 1949 (Nos. 1 and 11). At this conference, the Geneva Convention was extended in order to protect the combatants who struggle against colonialism and foreign intervention. That is, said Conference confers prisoner of war status on all anti-colonial combatants. Before this, at the 1974 session of the Diplomatic Conference, the Cuban delegate stated that he voted in favor of article 1, paragraph 4, understanding that the text of the resolution was not limited to movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity and The League of Arab States, or those movements that were present at the Conference, but extended to others, including the Puerto Rican National Liberation Movement. (Rozas, "The Legal Status of Prisoners of War", Helsinki, 1976, pg. 274, taken from Libertad, Vol. II, No. I, May 1980).

Article 45 of the additional protocols sustain the right of any prisoner of war to be heard by a federal court until his status can be decided by the appropriate international tribunal. The judges, prosecution, jury and all those who participate in this illegal process against the prisoners of war, do so representing the foreign power that occupies the colony. For this reason, the prisoners demand the right to be taken before an ad-hoc military tribunal

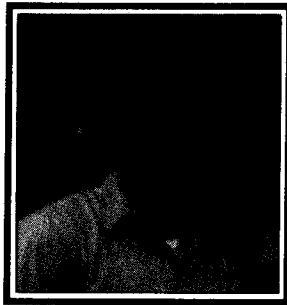
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organized in a neutral country. International law protects them. Lamentably, the intransigence of the imperialist government weighs heavily on international law, although the US itself was a signatory to some of these very treaties.

### Patriots, Not Terrorists

The US wants to sow the idea that those who use armed revolution as an organized means of resistance, as anti-colonial protest, as prolonged people's war, as the seizure of power, as an act of self-defense against aggressions which have included assassinations of independence activists or any other means of struggle, are terrorists. The Puerto Rican independence movement and other advanced sectors of our people do not see it that way. They view the POWs as they should be seen—as patriots. And that is how they have been viewed since the 19th Century. Great historical figures have been characterized by their defense of our prisoners of war. From Ramón Emeterio Betances and Eugenio María de Hostos to Juan Antonio Corretjer, the defense has been that they are patriots and not terrorists.

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Edwin Cortés was born in Chicago, Illinois on March 27, 1955. He is one of 15 children. He is married to his compañera Alva and together they have two children, Noemi, 9 years old and Carlos Alberto who is 7 years of age.

As a student leader, he participated in struggles in support of the Iranian and Palestinian people. Edwin was one of the founders of the **Union for Puerto Rican Students**, an organization that defended student rights, promoted the history and culture of Puerto Rico and organized support for Puerto Rican independence. In 1978, Edwin graduated from the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle Campus, receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science. Edwin was also active in several community struggles, particularly on the south side of Chicago, where he was born and raised. He helped found the **Pedro Albizu Campos Collective**, a group of independence activists who organized community and youth programs. He later helped establish the Latino Cultural Center.

On June 29, 1983, Edwin was captured along with two other comrades and charged with seditious conspiracy. He is currently serving a 35-year sentence at the Lewisburg FCI in Pennsylvania. His biography was published in *The Indispensables* (bilingual publication, 1984).

### HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

The violations of Edwin's human rights began when he was captured and imprisoned at the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Chicago. For the first 10 1/2 months of his pretrial detention, Edwin was held completely incommunicado. He was locked up for 23 hours a day, in a 10'x6' cell containing only a steel cot and foam mattress, a commode

## Edwin Cortés

and wash basin and a window that measured 5 inches in diameter. A light burned in the cell for 16 hours each day. Edwin was denied all human contact, his telephone conversations with family and friends were limited. His wife and children were allowed to visit him for only one hour per week and even then, always in the presence of two armed guards.

For one month Edwin's hands were cuffed during his legal and family visits. Edwin's mail was censored and he was denied access to the prison law library and gymnasium.

On February 19, 1984, prison officials prescribed medicine without first examining him. Hours later, Edwin complained of severe abdominal pains. He was eventually taken to Mercy Hospital where he was chained to the bed under 24-hour guard. Barely an hour beforehand, the prison officials informed Edwin that his appendix would be removed. Edwin refused since he was denied a second opinion.

On February 20, 1984, he was taken off the IV and told he would remain under observation for a period of 24-48 hours. One hour after he was told this, US marshals, not bothering to consult a doctor, removed him from the hospital and transferred him back to an isolation cell at the MCC. He was denied any medical attention as well as a special diet.

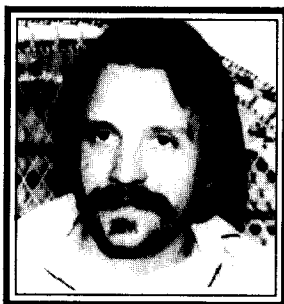
On April 20, 1984, two police agents attempted to break his arm. As a result of this struggle, Edwin incurred several contusions on his arm.

Edwin is currently serving a 35 year sentence for seditious conspiracy at Lewisburg federal prison in Pennsylvania, one of the most repressive prisons in the US penal system.

Edwin Cortés #92153-024 Unit B-2  
P.O. Box 1000, Lewisburg, PA 17837



## The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War



Elizam Escobar was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico on May 24, 1948. His parents reside in Puerto Rico and are members of the **Special Committee in Support and Defense of Puerto Rican Prisoners of War**. His son Elizer is 10 years old and lives in New York. Elizam received a Bachelor's Degree in Visual Arts from the University of Puerto Rico and later continued his studies at the New York City College, Museo del Barrio and the Art Students League in New York City. From 1979-80, Elizam taught at the Museo del Barrio's School of the Arts. He is considered one of our most illustrious Puerto Rican revolutionaries, poets and painters. His paintings have been exhibited in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and in more than 10 Puerto Rican cities. The paintings he created in jail are currently being exhibited throughout the United States.

His works have been published in several magazines including *Beginnings* and *Currents*. He published a series in *De Pie y En Lucha* and soon will finish a collection entitled *The Ontological War Against the Art Market: An Act of Liberation*. His works have also appeared in the Anthology of Latino Poets in New York. Some of his more recent illustrations can be found in *Cuadernos de Poetica*, published in the Dominican Republic. Quimera Editors published his book, *Speech in the Night and Sonia Semenovena*, while another article appeared in the art magazine, *Left Curve*.

Since April 4, 1980 Elizam has been serving a 68-year prison sentence, accused of seditious conspiracy. He was later accused of being a member of the **Armed Forces of Puerto Rican National Liberation (FALN)**.

## Elizam Escobar

### HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

During the first four years of his incarceration in Illinois State prisons, Elizam was transferred seven times. Each transfer was calculated to disrupt the normalcy of his life, create a sense of confusion and tension and impose economic hardship on his family. He is photographed regularly at the prison and his activities are severely restricted. On March 7, 1984 Elizam was transferred to a federal prison in Oxford, Wisconsin. An exhibition of some of his major art works was placed in the Oxford prison corridor. A few days later, after the inauguration of his art exhibition, prison officials rushed him out of Oxford and transferred Elizam to Oklahoma. In the meantime, prison officials told Elizam's lawyers that he was en route to Alabama. His transfer to Oklahoma was a malicious move, since the El Reno prison has no art workshop or single cells. Elizam was housed in the prison dormitory where he was informed that he could not paint or store his art materials.

While Elizam languished at El Reno, his art exhibition, *Art as an Act of Liberation* was received with enthusiastic support at the Axe Street Arena, Galeria Kalpulli, Rafael Cintrón-Ortiz Cultural Center in Chicago; at the ABC No Rio Gallery in New York City and the Dissident Voices Gallery in Philadelphia. In every city, people wanted to know, *where is the artist?* After people learned that Elizam was imprisoned and prohibited from painting, their next question was *what can we do about it?* Hundreds of people wrote letters of protest and demanded that Elizam be allowed to paint. The prison administration ignored the protests, as well as the attention of the local and national media. A distinguished delegation, which included famous artists Lucy Lippard,

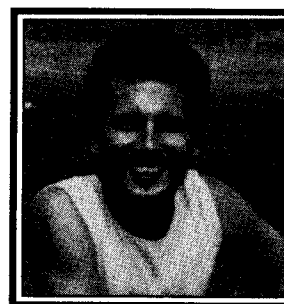
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Piri Thomas, Csaba Polony and Jay Murphy, recently met with prison officials to demand that Elizam's right to express his creativity be respected.

Those interested in combatting such censorship or to exhibit his paintings can write to Friends of Elizam, c/o Puerto Rican Cultural Center, 1671 North Claremont Avenue, Chicago, IL 60647.

**Elizam Escobar #88969-024, Box 1500  
Colorado Unit, El Reno, Oklahoma 73036**

## Ricardo Jiménez



Ricardo Jiménez was born in San Sebastian, Puerto Rico on April 3, 1956. His family later moved to Chicago, where Ricardo became active in the struggle to assure community participation in the educational process at Tuley High School. He attended Loyola University and at the time of his capture, Ricardo was completing his studies at the Chicago Institute of Technology in Chicago. Ricardo is currently serving a 90-year sentence for seditious conspiracy and other charges.

### Human Rights Violations

During his 4-year incarceration in State prisons, Ricardo was transferred six times. Every transfer was abrupt, without explanation and carried out in total secrecy. His family and friends were never informed of his destination. His transfers have caused emotional and financial distress for his family.

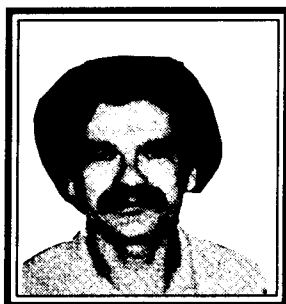
At every prison he has been in, he has been denied access to any educational or cultural programs.

On one occasion, his legal materials and personal correspondence were withheld for several months. While Ricardo was incarcerated at Stateville, his paralegals were routinely denied visitation rights without any explanation. Ricardo's visitors and their cars were regularly searched by guards employing dynamite-sniffing dogs. Ricardo has endured physical and psychological harassment by prison guards. Although his family and friends live in Chicago, Ricardo is imprisoned several hundred miles away in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. He is allowed only five people on his visiting list.

**Ricardo Jiménez #88967-024 Unit A-2  
Box 1000, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania 17837**



## The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War



Oscar López-Rivera was born in San Sebastian, Puerto Rico on January 6, 1943. At the age of 12, he moved to Chicago with his family. He was a well-respected community activist and a prominent independence leader for many years prior to his arrest. Oscar was one of the founders of the **Rafael Cancel Miranda High School**, now known as the **Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School** and the **Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center**. He was a community organizer for the Northwest Community Organization (NCO), ASSPA, ASPIRA and the 1st Congregational Church of Chicago. He helped to found FREE, (a half-way house for convicted drug addicts) and ALAS (an educational program for Latino prisoners at Stateville Prison in Illinois).

He was active in various community struggles, mainly in the area of health care, employment and police brutality. He also participated in the development of the **Committee to Free the Five Puerto Rican Nationalists**. In 1975, he was forced underground, along with other comrades. He was captured on May 29, 1981, after 5 years of being persecuted by the FBI as one of the most feared fugitives from US "justice".

Oscar, who has a 17-year old daughter named Clarissa, is currently serving a 55-year sentence for seditious conspiracy and other charges. He was recently convicted of conspiracy to escape along with Jaime Delgado, (a veteran independence leader), Dora García, (a prominent community activist) and Kojo Bomani-Sababu, a New Afrikan political prisoner.

During his incarceration, he has written many short stories and articles for *Libertad*. He also writes for the pro-independence publication *Patria Libre*. Oscar is considered one of the most brilliant political thinkers in Puerto Rico.

## Oscar López-Rivera

### HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Since his capture in May of 1981, Oscar has been subject to terrible abuse. He has been put in segregation without any explanation. Prison officials insult and provoke him; even the death of his father was used to manipulate and humiliate him. When he asked for permission to attend his father's funeral, his request became a joke among the prison guards.

Upon arriving at Leavenworth federal prison in Kansas in 1981, he was forced to undergo urine sample testing more than twice a month. In view of the fact that these tests are usually administered to drug addicts or prisoners who have drug-related charges, it is clear that the test was imposed on him as a means of harassment and degradation.

All of his correspondence is censored. Even his prison mail is read, a clear violation of the Bureau of Prison's own rules. He was not allowed to write to his compañera, POW Ida Luz Rodríguez, until February of 1984. Oscar has also not been allowed to communicate with any of his other comrades who have taken the POW position. Despite this, according to the Bureau of Prison's policies, such communication is guaranteed.

In order to present his case before an impartial international court, there needs to be dialogue between the prisoners and groups, organizations and individuals that support them. It is precisely for that reason that such communication is denied.

For more than nine months, Oscar was suffering from problems aggravated by a severe case of hemorrhoids. In the Spring of 1983, he was taken to the prison hospital at Springfield, Missouri under the pretext of medical treatment. Once he arrived there, he was put in segregation and for the nine days that he was in the hospital Oscar was subject to harassment day and night. He was forced to change cells constantly and each change was accompanied by extreme temperature changes. After Oscar went through all of this, he

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was returned to Leavenworth and told that he was "healthy".

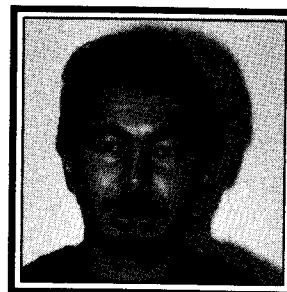
The fact that he never received medical treatment while in Springfield was a strange occurrence, and it was only with the arrest of Alberto Rodríguez, Alejandrina Torres, Edwin Cortés and José Luis Rodríguez that Oscar came to know the reason behind the incident. His hospitalization was orchestrated by the US government in hopes of trapping these compañeros in an attempt to liberate him.

After his arrival at Leavenworth, Oscar began to suffer from an intolerable skin allergy and the prison's response was to let him wait three weeks before allowing him to see a doctor and another two weeks before he could see a skin specialist. As a result of this mistreatment, Oscar now bears splotches on his skin. While Oscar served in Vietnam, he was stationed in areas that had been sprayed with Agent Orange. All of this was explained to doctors, in hopes that they would investigate what connection, if any, there was between his skin allergy and exposure to Agent Orange. To this day, nothing has been done about it.

Oscar was transferred to the federal penitentiary in Marion, Illinois, which is considered one big control unit in its totality and which has been on "lock-down" for more than 4 years

**Oscar López-Rivera #87651-024**  
**P.O. Box 1000, Marion, Illinois 62959**

## Adolfo Matos



Adolfo Matos was born in Lajas, Puerto Rico on September 18, 1950. His parents still reside in his hometown. He moved to New York City when he was very young and later met and married his beloved compañera Helen Rosado. He is the father of two daughters, Rosa María, 16 years of age and Lydia, who is 11 years old.

Adolfo was captured on April 4, 1980 in Evanston, Illinois. He is currently serving a 70-year federal sentence for seditious conspiracy and other charges.

He is a skilled artist, working with copper etchings that depict Puerto Rican historical and cultural figures. A permanent exhibition of his work is on display at the Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago. With his optimism, his smile and his love for his people, Adolfo is a *Jibaro Terminao* in every sense of the word.

## HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Since his capture in 1980, he has been held for 46 months in various Illinois state prisons. During this period he was transferred 10 times to 9 different state prisons. These transfers are akin to a kidnapping, since Adolfo is not informed and taken at dawn, handcuffed and chained, accompanied by many US marshals and forced to travel at speeds in excess of 70-80 miles per hour. He is never told of his destination and is denied permission to contact either his family or lawyer.

In almost all prisons, Adolfo was placed in solitary confinement or "administrative detention". He was not allowed personal property and could not communicate with other prisoners or use the telephone.

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He was locked down twenty-three hours a day. All of his activities were documented every half hour and kept in a log. If he was asleep, the guards would wake him up, using as a pretext the need to find out if he was still alive. This was just an excuse to harass him. Prison officials informed him that he was a high security prisoner in a low security prison.

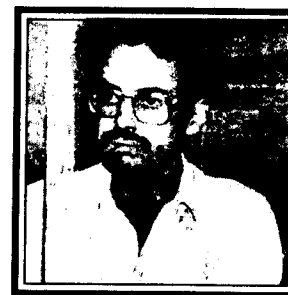
His visits, recreation and correspondence were restricted. His visitors were made to wait hours before they could see Adolfo. In addition, visitors were the object of harassment by prison officials. Legal visits were supervised and on many occasions, the paralegals were unable to speak to prison officials and were even forced to terminate their visits abruptly.

Adolfo is currently incarcerated in a federal prison camp in Lompoc, California. This prison is located literally cross country from his family, which resides in New York City. His visits are limited to his immediate family and paralegals may only visit him one at a time.

His prison counselor told him that his friends and those that supported Puerto Rican independence would be denied the right to visit, using the excuse that they did not know him before his capture. One of the elements of the "denial" system is to deny the prisoner regular (social) as well as legal visits. In addition, prison officials are constantly provoking Adolfo.

**Adolfo Matos #88968-024**  
**3901 Klein Blvd., Lompac, CA 93436**

## Guillermo Morales



Guillermo Morales was born in New York on February 7, 1950. He studied at the School of Visual Arts in New York, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Arts and Cinematography. As part of his academic work, he produced a documentary about Puerto Rican culture. He is an accomplished photographer. His graduation thesis was a documentary about the development of the Nationalist movement in Puerto Rico and the death of Pedro Albizu Campos.

Guillermo Morales is one of the 4 million Puerto Ricans that have been raised in the US, where he learned that only by struggle could freedom be obtained for his people.

He was captured for the first time in 1978, in New York City, after an explosion in his apartment in which he lost the fingers from both hands, and the vision in his right eye.

The FBI did not allow him surgery to reconnect his fingers, instead, they beat him and pounded on his mutilated hands to try and make him talk. Guillermo sacrificed his personal freedom so as to take the colonial situation of Puerto Rico, outside the courts of the United States, declaring himself a Prisoner of War.

Guillermo is the first Puerto Rican combatant captured in the US to assume this position.

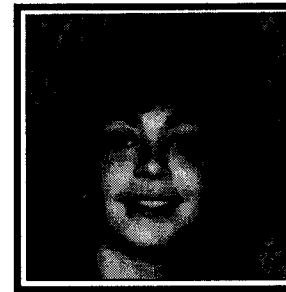
He was sentenced to prison for 89 years. In 1979, he escaped from Bellevue Hospital, using the bandages of his hands to escape through one of the hospital windows. The Puerto Rican community declared him one of their heroes and a great fighter for the freedom of Puerto Rico. The FBI declared him a fugitive and pursued him constantly until they found him in Mexico in 1983. He was convicted in Mexico and sentenced to 12 and a half years in prison to be served at the *Reclusorio del Norte*. This

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sentence was later reduced by a judge to 8 years. This judge recognized Guillermo as a political prisoner, pointing out that *he is a valuable element to his political movement*. If Guillermo were extradited to the US, he would be tortured physically and psychologically as happened in New York and Mexico. It is for this reason that the Puerto Rican independence movement has initiated a campaign appealing to the traditional hospitality of the Mexican nation, which has never denied political asylum to the politically persecuted. We ask Mexico to grant political asylum to the compatriot Guillermo Morales or to allow him to seek asylum in another country that will assure his physical and moral integrity. At this time, three countries (Angola, Libya and Ethiopia), have offered him political asylum. This campaign counts on the support of wide sectors of the population in Puerto Rico, Mexico and the United States.

**Guillermo Morales Apartado Postal 20-853  
Col. San Angel, Mexico 20, D.F.**

## Dylcia Pagán



Dylcia Pagán was born in "El Barrio" in New York City on October 15, 1946. She attended Brooklyn College where she majored in Cinematography and Sociology, participated in the struggle for students' rights and founded the Puerto Rican Students Union. She taught social studies in the

New York City school system, has worked for all three major television networks (ABC, NBC, CBS) and also for the daily newspaper *El Tiempo*.

Dylcia was captured April 4, 1980 along with other comrades. She is serving a 55-year sentence on charges of seditious conspiracy among others. She has already completed an 8-year state sentence.

Dylcia's patriotism has manifested itself in many artistic forms which include painting, ceramics, poetry and her writings. She has participated in the production of a video about her life and lives of her compañeros in the struggle. While in prison, she helped direct a documentary about the Puerto Rican Women Prisoners of War.

Her biography has been published in *Puerto Rican Women: A History of Oppression and Resistance*. Dylcia's poetry has appeared in *Have You Seen La Nueva Mujer Puertorriqueña?* Part of Dylcia's life story was also included in a book by the famous anthropologist, John Langston Gwaltney entitled, *The Dissenters: Voices from Contemporary America*.

## HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

The first three days of her capture, Dylcia was kept in isolation and was physically injured by the guards.

## The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

At Cook County Prison in Chicago, she was held in solitary confinement for 7 days and was subjected to humiliating strip searches before and after legal visits. Dylcia was held in isolation as a "Preliminary Hearing Detainee". She was under constant surveillance through the use of audio and video tape recordings and from the marshals, who documented every movement. When she was moved to the Dirksen Federal Building, (a distance of only two blocks ) it was done with an escort that consisted of six carloads of FBI agents and federal marshals, a helicopter and guards armed with M16 rifles.

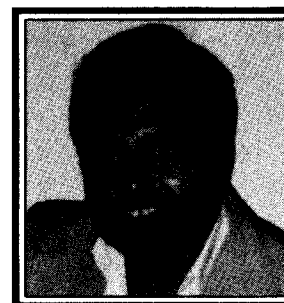
Besides being under constant surveillance at the MCC, her movements were also severely restricted. She was confined to her immediate area of the prison and allowed to go to different floors of the prison only if escorted by an armed guard. Dylcia was denied access to fresh air, to exercise, her mail was intercepted and censored. Her visits were limited to three persons and she was not allowed receive any political literature. Dylcia was constantly harassed by two guards and on two different occasions, she was put in solitary confinement on ridiculous charges, for example, embracing a fellow political prisoner.

From August 1980 to December 1983, Dylcia was incarcerated at Dwight Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. At her arrival there, she was put in solitary confinement for 3 weeks.

Dylcia is currently imprisoned at the Pleasanton Federal Correctional Institution in California. Once again she was put in isolation for a week and a log was kept, to document her every movement. This surveillance method is used only with the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War.

Dylcia Pagán #88971-024  
5701 8th St., Camp Parks, Dublin, CA 94566

## Alberto Rodríguez



Alberto Rodríguez was born in New York City on April 14, 1953. Before his first birthday, his parents relocated to Chicago, Illinois. He is the father of two children, Yazmín and Ricardo Alberto, who are 5 and 10 years old, respectively.

Alberto participated in his first political action at the early age of 15, when he took part in the demonstrations protesting the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He attended the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle Campus, where he obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science. He was one of the founders of the **Union for Puerto Rican Students**. A member of the **Committee for Community Orientation**, Alberto was actively involved in community issues such as the struggle for decent housing, education and police brutality. He was also a member of the **Workers' Rights Committee**. Alberto was later employed as a college counselor for Borinquena Campus, a community college program sponsored by the **Puerto Rican Cultural Center**. He also helped established the **Latino Cultural Center** on the south side of Chicago.

His political awareness as an *independentista* includes his active participation in the **Pedro Albizu Campos Collective** and the **National Committee to Stop the Grand Jury**.

Captured on June 29, 1983, along with other comrades, Alberto was sentenced to 35 years in prison for seditious conspiracy and other related charges. From behind prison walls, Alberto has written a number of articles for *Libertad*, *The Insurgent*, *Que Ondeé Sola* and *La Voz del Pueblo*. His biography was published in *The Indispensables*.

## The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

### HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Immediately after his arrest on June 29, 1983, Alberto was placed in solitary confinement at the Chicago Metropolitan Correctional Center. This method of isolation is frequently used to create conditions of tension, alienation and disorientation to destroy the will and break the spirit of captured combatants. Alberto was kept under 23-hour lockdown in a cell which measured 10' x 6". The cell contained only a steel cot, commode and wash basin. Alberto was forced to carry out his activities, reading, writing and even eating while sitting on the cell's concrete floor. He was allowed no human contact other than with abusive MCC guards. Even his food was slid through a slot in the cell's steel door.

Every time Alberto was taken out of his cell, his hands were cuffed behind his back and two guards were assigned to watch him. For an entire month, he was handcuffed during his family and legal visits. Alberto's sleep was constantly interrupted by loud banging and yelling that often occurred throughout the night. These conditions were purposely created by the prison administration to exacerbate tension between guards and the prisoners.

In addition to the conditions described above, other restrictions were also imposed on Alberto. He was denied telephone access and his family visits were limited to one hour per week. His family visits were conducted in the presence of two armed guards who took notes of everything that was said. Alberto was strip-searched before and after every visit. Under the guise of medical attention, he was also denied access to fresh air, exercise and even medical attention.

Alberto is currently imprisoned at the Lewisberg federal penitentiary, one of the most repressive prisons in the United States.

**Alberto Rodríguez #92150-024 Unit B-3  
PO Box 1000, Lewisberg, PA 17837**

## Alicia Rodríguez



Alicia Rodríguez was born October 21, 1954 in Chicago, Illinois. She attended the University of Illinois in Chicago where she studied for three years for her Bachelors' degree in Biology.

Alicia was captured April 4, 1980 along with her sister Ida Luz and other comrades. She is serving a 30-year state charge and has a 55-year federal sentence awaiting her on charges of seditious conspiracy.

Since her capture she has artistically contributed to the **Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center** in Chicago and she teaches a photography class in prison. Her biography was published in the book: *Puerto Rican Women: A History of Oppression and Resistance* and John Langston Gwaltney, the famous author and anthropologist reveals part of her life in his book *The Dissenters: Voices From Contemporary America*.

### HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Immediately after Alicia's arrest, she was placed in a local prison where she was submitted to 24 hour interrogations. This was often repeated and on occasion they would videotape her movements. Legal and family visits were denied in the hopes of breaking her spirit.

Her transfer to Cook County prison in Chicago was treated like a riot control exercise. Upon her arrival, she was isolated for a week and a half in the prison infirmary under lock and key, denied both visits and the use of a telephone.

On the occasions that Alicia was allowed visitors, they were constantly harassed. Photos were taken and passed on to FBI agents so that they

## The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

could interrogate members of the community. She was physically and verbally abused in Judge Bailey's courtroom when she reaffirmed her principle of non-recognition of the colonial courts of the United States.

The following day Alicia was taken to the courthouse for a secret hearing. When she arrived, there were six guards waiting for her. To silence her they stuffed a cloth in her mouth, then pinched her nose so she could not breathe pulled on her hair and hit her on the back.

For the first six days of her trial, she was kept in the "cage" (small cell immediately outside the courtroom). She was subject to inhuman conditions, surveilled 24-hours a day, her cell inspected at all hours. She was denied visits, telephone privileges and could not write or receive letters. To protest these conditions, Alicia participated in a hunger strike.

She was denied paralegal visits for a period of time starting in May 1981. Disguising their arbitrary rules under the mantle of "security".

Any calls to Puerto Rico are denied and she is routinely put in isolation. She was abruptly removed from her post of librarian and is also subject to "FALN Body Counts" for "security" reasons. At this time she is under constant surveillance and her movements are limited and documented. She has been removed from her job at the prison library for so-called "security reasons" and she is constantly moved from cell to cell. But all this will not break the spirit of Alicia Rodríguez!

**Alicia Rodríguez #N07157**  
**Box 5001, Dwight, Illinois 60420**

## Ida Luz Rodríguez



Ida Luz Rodríguez was born in Las Marias, Puerto Rico on July 7, 1950. When she was barely two years old, her family moved to Chicago. She studied at Northeastern Illinois University, majoring in Psychology and Sociology. Damian, her 15-year old son, attends the Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School and lives with his grandparents in Chicago.

She was recognized for her outstanding work at the Rafael Cancel Miranda Puerto Rican High School, today known as the Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School, and the Committee to Free the 5 Puerto Rican Nationalists. In 1976, along with her compañero Oscar López-Rivera, she went underground and was captured along with other comrades, on April 4, 1980. She is serving an 80-year sentence for seditious conspiracy and other charges, after serving an 8-year state sentence. While incarcerated at Pleasanton federal prison in California, Lucy participated in the production of a video, which tells the story of part of her life and the lives of her compañeras in struggle. She occasionally contributes articles to *Libertad*, and her bibliography has been published in the book, *Puerto Rican Women: A History of Oppression and Resistance*. Another book which devotes a chapter to their story is John Langston Gwaltney's *The Dissenters: Voices from Contemporary America*.

## HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Using the pretext of "security" and in order to justify some of its repressive measures, the US government has forbidden Ida Luz from writing to her compañero, POW Oscar López-Rivera (captured on May 26, 1981 and incarcerated in Marion federal prison.).



## The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

When she arrived at the Alderson Women's Federal Correctional Institution in West Virginia in April, 1984, she was immediately put in a "behavior modification unit" known as Davis Hall. This unit was closed by order of a federal court in 1979 and opened especially for Ida Luz and Haydeé Torres. In this unit, a guard (almost always a male) was assigned to watch them and document their behavior and moves every half hour. The cells measure twelve by seven feet and have opaque windows that cannot be opened, terrible lighting and are "bugged" so that the prison administration may hear their conversations and movements.

Due to the vicious and distorted propaganda (she was called a "bloodthirsty terrorist") used against her, the guards have shown that they are scared of and hate her. This has created a very dangerous situation for Ida Luz. Some of the guards were known to remark, *why let her out of the cell at all? Don't you know she can kill you?* The prison administration has fed into this hysteria by holding employee seminars on "Terrorism and how to combat it".

When her family made the 16-hour trip to visit her at Alderson, the authorities denied them an extended visit (a routine courtesy) and limited their visit to two hours. Ida Luz's use of the telephone is severely restricted. Every time she wanted to use the phone, a prison guard had to verbally give her permission. This routine was designed to humiliate and discourage her from using the phone, since she was handcuffed behind the back. The same routine was in effect for her legal calls, in obvious violation of her right to privacy and confidentiality with her legal advisor.

She was prohibited from exercising jointly with Haydeé. When she was allowed to take recreation, a guard accompanied her in order to insure that no other inmates spoke with her. Her visits were limited and her visitors constantly harassed, making her visits pressure and tension filled. A guard was also assigned to this task, surveilling and docu-

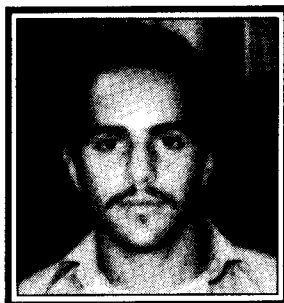
## Ida Luz Rodríguez

menting everything that was said. The visits took place in Davis Hall, not in a regular visiting room. In her particular case, the prison administration imposed a ludicrous rule which allowed visits for only two hours daily, thereby making it very difficult for friends and family who live in Chicago to visit Lucy.

All correspondence, incoming and outgoing, is first routed through a Spanish-speaking guard, so that he may read it. Some correspondence arrived opened and without any mail inside.

*Ida Luz Rodríguez #88973-024  
5701 8th St., Camp Parks, Dublin, CA. 94566*

## The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War



Luis Rosa was born in Chicago, Illinois on August 6, 1960. At the time of his capture April 4, 1980, he was living with his mother and 3 younger brothers. His father died on the day of his birth. Luis has a son by the name of Luis Jr., age 10. Luis studied at the University of Illinois in Chicago, was president and organizer of the **Union for Puerto Rican Students**. He was a community activist involved in such issues as police brutality and the lack of services in the Puerto Rican community.

Before his capture, Luis was writing poetry and playing congas with a cultural group. From behind prison walls, Luis still expresses his feelings through his poetry and music. He is a regular contributor to *Libertad* and other publications. His poetry has been published in *Flores y Balas*. Luis was sentenced to 30 years on State charges and 55-years on Federal charges, including seditious conspiracy and other charges.

### HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Since his capture 8 years ago Luis has been transferred 14 different times within 8 security prisons in Illinois and isolated 9 different times. Thirty-eight photos were taken upon his arrival at Joliet Penitentiary, force was used and the photos were distributed to the guards at the prison interrogation room and high prison officials. He was forced to take one photo per month and if he refused, he was put in isolation. He was also accused of a conspiracy to help other prisoners escape. False

## Luis Rosa

charges were filed against Luis after a guard was injured when a Judge ordered them to restrain Luis.

The repression and hostility were not limited to Luis alone, it extended to members of the community. His brother, Félix was arrested on false charges. The motives behind these false arrests was to secure convictions on charges of being members of the FALN. For 6 years Félix Rosa was subjected to the same inhumane and brutal treatment to which prisoners of war are subject in the United States.

His mother and family were under constant surveillance. On one occasion, his mother was hit by an ambulance while she was walking on the sidewalk (she was on her way to see Luis). His grandfather was interrogated at gun point which provoked a heart attack. His son was almost kidnapped by a man who resembled a known FBI agent.

The purpose of these calculated and systematic acts of repression is to isolate Luis from his family, friends and supporters in the community.

Luis Rosa NO2743

Box 711, Menard, Illinois 52259

## The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War



Alejandrina Torres was born in San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico on June 18, 1939, the 9th daughter of 10 children. When she was 11 years old, she and her family migrated to New York where she graduated from high school. In 1963, she moved to Chicago and one year later, married the Reverend José Torres, a community activist and Pastor of the 1st Congregational Church of Chicago. Together they raised the Reverend Torres' 3 children from a previous marriage, Carlos Alberto, Norma and Nidza Margarita, as well as two daughters of their own, Liza Beth and Catalina.

Throughout the 1960's, Alejandrina was a leader in her community, first as a founding member and later a teacher, at the Rafael Cancel Miranda Puerto Rican High School, now known as the Pedro Albizu Campos High School. She later helped found the Betances Clinic and served as secretary of the 1st Congregational Church of Chicago where she organized a variety of community programs. She also participated in the **Committee to Free the Five Nationalists**, eventually becoming an active member of the **National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War**.

### HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

After her capture in 1983, Alejandrina was placed in administrative detention, segregated from the general population in an all-male unit. She was incarcerated 24 hours per day and forced to endure the explicitly vulgar sexual taunting of the male prisoners and guards. On one occasion, a prisoner stood before her cell completely naked. When she complained to the guard on duty, he laughed at her and told her the men were free to do as they pleased on their unit.

## Alejandrina Torres

Alejandrina suffered a heart attack due to the daily trauma of her environment, the lack of fresh air and her total isolation. Although Alejandrina suffers from a condition called Left Bundle Branch Block and Mitral Valve Prolapse, she was still denied access to a heart specialist or to the treatment needed for her condition.

Eventually she was moved to general population but had limited use of the telephone and her correspondence, both legal and social, was censored. She was restricted from using both legal and regular library, and was kept from participating in social or educational programs. She was not permitted to participate in recreational activities in the gymnasium or to attend religious services inside the prison.

She was only allowed to visit one hour weekly with her husband or children. Visiting hours began at 8:00 a.m. Saturday mornings. If for any reason her visitors arrived late, the visit was denied. Visits were held in the presence of a guard who took notes during their conversations. Family visits with relatives other than her husband or daughters had to be approved as "special visits" and supporters and friends were denied visits altogether. In other words, the same restrictions which were applied in segregation were applied to Alejandrina while she was in general population.

On June 22, 1984, Alejandrina experienced a brutal physical assault. After a visit from her daughter, Alejandrina was ordered to submit to a strip search, which she did not refuse. Upon dressing after the search, she was ordered to re-strip for a second search. When she protested this harassment, a male officer accused her of disobeying orders. Alejandrina consented to the second strip search on the condition that it be executed by female guards. The officer did not permit this and he forced her down onto her knees, hands held behind her back, head pushed between his legs. He directed four female guards to undress her and conduct the strip search, during which time they beat her. This action can not

## The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

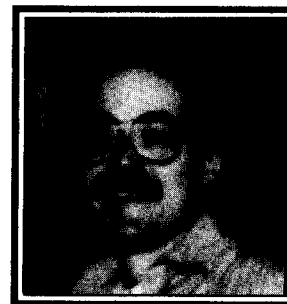
be considered anything but a brutal and savage physical and psychological violation against Alejandrina.

These abuses constitute a vicious violation of Alejandrina's human rights. She is presently incarcerated in the Lexington Control Unit, in the federal prison in Lexington, Kentucky where she faces continued physical and psychological torture to break the spirit and health of this brave woman. She is under 24 hour surveillance, even while bathing, has extremely limited visitation rights and suffers from sensory deprivation due to the isolation of the unit which is underground, in the basement of a building separate from the rest of the prison. She is only allowed two ten-minute personal phone calls per week. Her mail is censored and all political correspondence is returned.

She is presently threatened with punitive measures for refusing to perform strenuous work which causes her to have heart palpitations. Despite her fragile health, she is locked in her cell at night without access to any sort of emergency medical assistance should she suffer another heart attack. Her every movement is logged in a record book to be analyzed for better understanding on how to destroy her spirit and anti-colonial resistance.

**Alejandrina Torres #92152-024 FCI-HSU**  
**3301 W. Leestown Road, Lexington, Kentucky**

## Carlos Alberto Torres



Carlos Alberto Torres was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico on September 19, 1952. His parents moved to New York, finally settling in Chicago. He studied in the University of Illinois in Carbondale and Chicago. Carlos was one of the founders of the **Rafael Cancel Miranda Puerto Rican High School** now known as the **Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School** and participated in the **Committee to Free the 5 Nationalists**.

In 1976, Carlos was forced to go underground and was on the FBI's 10 most wanted list. He was captured along with other comrades and sentenced to 88 years on charges of seditious conspiracy, among other charges. Carlos Alberto is a regular writer for *Libertad* and his short stories have been published in *Cuentos para la Libertad*.

## HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

In 1980, Carlos was placed in a cell at Cook County Prison that measured only 6 x 4 feet and on a 23 hour lockdown. He was denied any exercise or recreation and family visits were limited to 1 hour a week. In addition, the cell was infested with rats, cockroaches and his food was of inferior quality and consistently cold.

Within a four year period, Carlos Alberto was moved six times to different prisons and on many of these occasions was placed in solitary confinement. The FBI encouraged the prison guards to mistreat Carlos (this was admitted by one of the guards). He was denied medical attention on a regular basis.

While under federal detention, he was kept in isolated cells inside the courtroom building and kept under lock and key 23 hours a day. He could not

## The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

receive family visits, write or receive letters or exercise. He was not allowed reading materials or any communication with prisoners of war. He participated in a hunger strike, demanding his transfer to general population, the right to correspond and recreation.

When he arrived in Talladega, he was put in segregation for three weeks. He was informed that all of his correspondence must be in english or it would be returned to sender. The same arbitrary rule applied to his telephone conversations—they had to be in english or risk being cut off. Later he was put on restricted correspondence, which limited him to corresponding with only his mother, father, wife and brothers. All other correspondence was prohibited. Again, the same rule applied to his visits. At the same time, it was obvious that Carlos Alberto was singled out for mistreatment.

This mistreatment was carried out with the intention of making him "disappear" spiritually and intellectually. All of these violations are carried out to break the spirit and will of Carlos and the other prisoners of war. Carlos Alberto to this day has continued to resist with the spirit of all the prisoners of war.

**Carlos Alberto Torres #88976-024**  
**902 Renfroe Road, Talladega, Alabama 35160**

## Haydeé Torres



Haydeé Torres was born in Arecibo, Puerto Rico on June 7, 1955. When Haydeé was 12 years of age, her parents moved to Chicago. At Tuley Junior High School, she organized a boycott that demanded the firing of a racist principal. Haydeé attended the University of Illinois at Chicago where she was an outspoken defender of Latino students' rights. She was one of the founders of the **Rafael Cancel Miranda Puerto Rican High School**, later renamed **Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos** and also participated in the **Committee to Free the 5 Puerto Rican Nationalists**.

Haydeé was forced to go underground in 1976 and was captured April 4, 1980, along with other comrades. She has been sentenced to life in prison on charges of seditious conspiracy, among others. Her life has been documented in a video about revolutionary women. Haydeé's biography can be found in *Puerto Rican Women: A History of Oppression and Resistance*.

## HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Haydeé was the first POW to receive a life sentence. She was kept in total isolation from the other prisoners of war and transferred to a special control unit which limited visits by family, friends and supporters. It was a year before she was allowed to see her family. At the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Chicago, she was classified as "no visitors allowed". Only her lawyers could see her after they had been approved by the US

## The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

government. Haydeé was subject to physical abuse in interrogations for refusing to implicate her comrades in unfounded crimes. This was done several times by FBI and other government agents. These and other inhumane acts by the US government have led to serious injuries which prison medical directors have misdiagnosed, also, Haydeé has received injections of unknown medications.

Haydeé is currently at the Pleasanton federal prison in California, thousands of miles away from her immediate family and friends.

Haydeé Torres #88642-024

5701 W. 8th St., Camp Parks, Dublin, CA. 94566

## Carmen Valentín



Carmen Valentín was born in Arecibo, Puerto Rico on March 2, 1946. At the age of 9, her family moved to Chicago. She has a 18-year old son, Antonio, who is attending DePaul University in Chicago. Carmen graduated from Northeastern Illinois University with a Master's Degree in Spanish. She was very

active in community struggles for better services and education. Carmen led the fight to reverse a 73% drop-out rate among our youth in the Chicago Public School system. She was a counselor at Tuley High School and Central YMCA Community College where she helped in the struggle for better conditions for Third World students.

Carmen is serving a 90-year sentence for charges of seditious conspiracy. From prison, her poetry has been published in a book entitled: *Have You Seen La Nueva Mujer Puertorriqueña?* Carmen has contributed articles to *Libertad* and artistically, to the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago. John Langston Gwaltney, the famous author and anthropologist documented part of Carmen's life in a book entitled: *The Dissenters: Voices of Contemporary America*.

## HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Carmen Valentín was captured April 4, 1980 and for the first three days she was held under the worst conditions ever in the State of Illinois. She was only allowed to see her son once in five months and was strip-searched on every visit. She was subject to a system called "Call and Report" where the guards were required to report on her movements every hour.

## **The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War**

She was held for five months in the hospital section of the prison and in one particular instance, shut in a room with four other compañeras for a week. Carmen was denied contact with the outside world, as well as the general prison population. She was allowed to see her son (at that time only 10 years old) only once in five months. She was strip-searched before and after legal visits, a practice unheard of and not applied to other prisoners.

When she arrived at Dwight Prison, she was immediately quarantined for three weeks and allowed no recreation or communication.

In 1983, Carmen was transferred to Alderson, West Virginia and denied communication or contact with anyone for a week. In November of that year, she was transferred to Pleasanton federal prison in California, where her mail, political publications and other materials were intercepted and censored.

**Carmen Valentín #88974-024**

**5701 W. 8th Street, Camp Parks, Dublin, CA 94566**

**For more information on the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War, please contact the following committees:**

**Ministry to Prisoners of Conscience  
2048 W. Division  
Chicago, IL 60622**

**National Committee to Free  
Puerto Rican Prisoners of War  
PO Box 476698  
Chicago, IL 60647**

**New York  
PO Box 357, Hellgate Station  
New York, NY, 10029**

**Hartford  
Box 6072  
Hartford, CT, 06106**

**Philadelphia  
PO Box 24825  
Philadelphia, PA, 19130**

**Boston  
Box 613  
Dorchester, MA 02124**

**San Francisco  
3552 20th St.  
San Francisco**

**Special Committee in Support and Defense  
of the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War  
Box 137  
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00905**